

IACP CONDEMNS 'REPARATIVE THERAPY'

The Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy opposes the barbaric act of 'conversion therapy'

Dublin, Ireland.

Conversion or Reparative therapy is a range of dangerous and discredited practices that falsely claim to change a person's sexual orientation/gender identity/expression. Such practices have been widely rejected by mainstream medical and mental health organisations. Despite such universal discreditation, the continuing discrimination and societal bias against LGBTQI+ people result in practitioners conducting 'conversion therapy'.

In the aftermath of the recent screening of 'Once Gay - Matthew and Friends' at Townsend Presbyterian Church in west Belfast. The Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) are keen to emphasise that we reject the use of reparative or conversion therapy methods. Additionally, we these practices as unethical and would like to highlight the significant dangers inherent in the practice of same.

Young people are especially vulnerable to this practice. Many LGBTQI+ are coerced into attending camps and sessions with unqualified and potentially dangerous 'doctors. These experiences can lead to depression, anxiety, drug use, homelessness, and suicide. A 2007 study by the American Psychological Association concludes that there is no clear evidence that conversion therapy is effective and that there is significant evidence that it is harmful to LGBTQI+ people.

Furthermore, A 2009 APA Task Force on Appropriate Therapeutic Response to Sexual Orientation determined that mental health professionals should avoid telling clients that they can change their sexual orientation. This is due to a lack of evidence that such change is possible and the potential for such efforts to harm the patient's mental health.

Sources:

<https://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/resources/therapeutic-response.pdf>

<https://www.counseling.org/news/updates/by-year/2013/2013/01/16/ethical-issues-related-to-conversion-or-reparative-therapy>

<https://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/resources/just-the-facts.aspx>

<https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2015/04/therapies-sexual-orientation.aspx>

About IACP:

The Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy are the largest professional association for Counsellors and Psychotherapists in Ireland. With over 4000 members, IACP are devoted to creating the highest professional standards for our members and acting as a bridge between our members and their clients.

**Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy**

Contact: Hugh O'Donoghue – Communications & Media Officer

+353 (0) 12147933

+353 (0)877806033

hugh@iacp.ie

iacp.ie